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SUBJECT: MNSD Issues Communique Critical of Junta

¶1. On February 24, state-owned daily newspaper "Le Sahel" published the following statement by the National Movement for a Developing Society - Nassara (MNSD - the ruling party under the previous regime of President Tandja):

(Begin text - informal Embassy translation)

The MNSD National Party Executives are making the following statement today, February 21, 2010, to analyze the country's political situation, created by the military coup on February 18, 2010:

On February 18, 2010, for the 4th time in fifty years of independence, the Defense and Security Forces have seized power at the very moment when a Government's Ministers Council was being held;

After seizing the President of Republic, His Excellency Mamadou Tandja, and all the members of the Government who were present, the junta announced, early on in the evening, that they had put an end to the 6th Republic regime, suspended the Constitution, and dissolved all the related institutions.

The coup, which has caused loss of life, wounded many people, and caused significant material damages, was perpetrated against the regime in place, on the pretext that there was a "tense political situation," fully knowing that joint efforts were made in order to achieve a quick and satisfactory conclusion to the Inter-Nigerien Political Dialogue, led under the aegis of ECOWAS.

The MNSD National Party Executives would like to present their sincere condolences to the deceased families and wish a quick recovery to the wounded individuals. In their statement, the coup authors abusively and unfairly qualified the regime as dishonest, corrupt, and bankrupt in order to justify their offense.

How could anyone be indifferent to such allegations that seem to be putting words into somebody's mouth? In fact, is there any honest Nigerien who can ignore the courageous measures taken by President Mamadou Tandja to claim the sovereignty of Niger through the daring mine and oil politics that he initiated and implemented? How can someone not acknowledge here the President of Republic's Special

Program and the infrastructure started on the national level and in all the regions of our dear country that have highly contributed to improve quantitatively and qualitatively the living conditions of our courageous populations?

How could anyone seem to forget that, as far as democracy and human rights are concerned, that President Mamadou Tandja is a model, whether the detractors and all kinds of gossipmongers and brainwashers like it or not!

Mr. President Mamadou Tandja, MNSD-Nassara thanks and congratulates you. Our party, your party, will always remain faithful and grateful to you.

The MNSD National Party Executives energetically condemn the February 18, 2010 coup and hold its authors responsible for any risk of fallout and deterioration of the political, social, and economical situation in our country.

Therefore, the MNSD National Party Executives will take note of the

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